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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 2D HOWITZER BATTALION, 13TH ARTILLERY  
APO San Francisco 96289

AVGE-W

5 November 1966

SUBJECT: Operational Report On Lessons Learned (U)

AD386079

TO: Commanding Officer  
23d Artillery Group  
ATTN: AVGE-C  
APO 96289

Commanding General  
II Field Force Vietnam Artillery  
ATTN: AVFB-FA-C  
APO 96227

Commanding General  
United States Army Vietnam  
ATTN: AVC-DH  
APO 96307

Commander-In-Chief  
United States Army Pacific  
ATTN: GPOP-MH  
APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief Of Staff For Force Development  
Department of the Army  
Washington, D.C. 20310

SECTION I

1. (C) Significant Organization or Unit Activities
  - a. Administration and Personnel.

FOR OT RD  
670018

(1) Administration. Since the last reporting period the

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following awards and decorations have been awarded to members of this command.

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
Silver Star	1
Bronze Star	15
Army Commendation Medal	6
Air Medal	2
Purple Heart	6

## (2) Personnel.

(a) Currently this unit is 4% overstrength, but the present for duty strength remains 8% below that authorized. It is capable of performing all assigned missions. During this reporting period there has been a 35% turnover in personnel. The majority of the newly assigned personnel have been trained in their primary duty and no problems have been encountered in integrating them within the unit. Trained Fire Direction personnel continues to be critical due to the necessity of operating Fire Direction Centers on a twenty-four hour basis.

(b) A realignment in personnel was necessary to adequately provide the firing batteries with a twenty-four hour FDC capability (See para 1c, Section II).

## b. Intelligence.

(1) Battalion Air Observers flew 159 observation and reconnaissance missions during the reporting period in support of operations Sheridan/Cheyenne, Toledo and Blue Jay and also for night aerial surveillance of the Phu Loi and Di An complexes.

(2) A total of six combat and reconnaissance patrols were conducted with negative contact.

## c. Training.

(1) To insure that replacements arriving in this unit receive adequate refresher training, in-country orientations, weapons familiarization and qualification, a 40 hour block of instruction was given monthly. New arrivals were also briefed on unit mission, local situation and escape and evasion.

(2) Emphasis was placed on Artillery training. In order to increase accuracy and to reduce reaction times, each battery had one hour of FDC team drill and one hour of gun section drill each day.

(3) Airmobile training received continued interest due to the frequent airmobile operations this unit participated in. During this reporting period only a limited amount of airmobility training in external and

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internal loading was accomplished due to operational requirements.

(4) Fire Direction training was emphasized to the maximum extent possible. Newly assigned personnel were trained and previously assigned personnel were retrained (See Part 1, Section II).

## d. Operations.

(1) Headquarters and Service Battery spent an average of 23 days in tactical operation, four days in troop movement, and 65 days in training, support of the firing batteries, and defense of the Base Camp (See Inclosure 1).

(2) Operation Sheridan/Cheyenne. This operation was conducted in the Lai Khe area. Battery C departed on 27 July by CH-47 and required twelve sorties for the move. The battery fired in support of the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry; 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry; and 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry. Battery C returned to Base Camp on 4 August by CH-47.

(3) Operation Toledo. From 10 August to 5 September 1966, Battery A was attached to the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) under the operational control of the 2d Battalion, 319th Artillery. The battery mission varied during the separate phases from Direct Support to General Support.

(4) Operation Blue Jay. This operation was conducted at Tay Ninh area from 27 August to 18 September. During this operation the Battalion (-) was attached to the 196th Light Infantry Brigade reinforcing the 7th Battalion, 11th Artillery and the 3d Battalion, 82d Artillery. On 10 September Battery B cleared Tay Ninh for a one day search and destroy operation in support of the 2d Battalion, 1st Infantry. Also on 10 September Battery C moved to Tan Son Nhut by C-123 aircraft in Direct Support of the Capital Military District requiring six sorties for the move. Battery C returned to Tay Ninh by road march on 15 September.

(5) From 18 September to 30 September Battery B was attached to the 3d Battalion, 82d Artillery of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade. On 18 September Battery B cleared Tay Ninh on a search and destroy operation, supporting the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry. During the hours of darkness, the battery was under sporadic small arms fire and several Claymore mines were detonated outside the perimeter. Two Claymores which were detonated by the VC were responsible for one (1) KIA and one (1) WIA of the attached Infantry security platoon. Indirectly this led to the battery firing a salvo 400 meters short killing two friendly troops and wounding several (See para 1c, Section II).

(6) From 18 September to 4 October Battery C was attached to the 1st Battalion, 8th Artillery of the 25th Infantry Division in support of Operation Sunset Beach. While at Tran Bang, Battery C lost one 2½ ton truck as a result of hostile action (Claymore). Known kills for the

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battery were 8 VC KIA (body count) and one .50 caliber machinegun, one building destroyed and three secondary explosions.

(7) From 26 September to 4 October Battery A was positioned at Tan Son Nhut under the control of the Capital Military District. During this period it was extremely difficult to coordinate clearances to register the unit. As a result of the positioning of the battery, the ballistic trajectory of the howitzer would pass through the traffic pattern of the Tan Son Nhut Air Base. Clearance for a registration was finally granted when a detailed explanation was made to show that, without a registration, the probability of hitting a point target was doubtful.

(8) On 12 October Battery A was detached from the 2d Battalion, 13th Artillery and attached to the 1st Battalion, 7th Artillery of the 1st Infantry Division to assume the support of Bear Cat Base Camp mission of Battery C, 1st Battalion, 7th Artillery. On 14 October Battery A was detached from the 1st Battalion, 7th Artillery and attached to the 3d Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division. Upon attachment to the 3d Brigade, it was still necessary for the 2d Battalion, 13th Artillery to fly down to Bear Cat and conduct registrations as the organic direct support battalion (2d Battalion, 77th Artillery) did not have sufficient aircraft to accomplish this requirement.

(9) On 20 October Battery C departed Phu Loi for Xuan Loc to assume mission of Reinforcing the 54th Artillery Group.

(10) On 25 October Battery B was detached from the 2d Battalion, 13th Artillery and moved to Thu Doc where it was attached to Capital Military District in a direct support mission. To date in this operation the battery has credit for three (3) VC KIA's.

(11) On 28 October Battery A was detached from the 2d Battalion, 77th Artillery and attached to the 1st Battalion, 8th Artillery of the 25th Infantry Division at Trang Bang. Battery A departed Bear Cat on 28 October for Trang Bang with an overnight stay at Cu Chi.

(12) During the reporting period the following missions were fired.

<u>NUMBER OF MISSIONS</u>
3150

<u>AMMUNITION EXPENDED</u>
20733

## e. Logistics.

(1) Logistics for the period of this report consisted primarily of support of the battalion in the Phu Loi Base Camp area. Other logistic support included twenty-three days support during operation Blue Jay and the initial support for Battery A as it departed for Operation

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Toledo.

(2) During Operation Blue Jay supply, maintenance, ammunition and mess personnel operated from the 196th Light Infantry Brigade Base Camp at Tay Ninh. Class I, III, and V were obtained from supply points of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade at Tay Ninh. Hard to get Class II and IV items were resupplied by air and convoy from the Battalion Base Camp at Phu Loi. Maintenance support was provided by the 725th Maintenance Battalion, 25th Infantry Division initially. Excellent support was later provided by the 8th Support Battalion, 196th Light Infantry Brigade.

(3) The Battalion continues to experience difficulty in obtaining desired sizes of jungle fatigues and jungle boots; however, the situation is improving.

(4) As the Battalion continues to be employed by piece-mealing the batteries out, it has been necessary to send the Battalion Staff to the batteries to aid them. Significant progress has been made by the Battalion Motor Officer who has visited all of the batteries in their far-flung locations and who has made courtesy inspections of the rolling stock and log books of the units, and has aided the battery motor officers and personnel in making necessary corrections.

(5) The Battalion S4 Section has conducted courtesy CMMI inspections of all batteries in an effort to assist the batteries in maintaining their equipment, identifying excesses and shortages, and assisting the various account holders in keeping their accounts up to date.

(6) The Battalion Ammunition Section, in addition to resupplying ammunition for the Battalion, continues to be required to assist the 23d Artillery Group in resupplying batteries of the Group in Lai Khe and Phuoc Vinh.

(7) This Battalion has assisted in the staging of the 7th Battalion, 9th Artillery. The advance party arrived in Vietnam on 12 October 1966, and has been satellited onto this Battalion. Transportation, men, facilities and labor have been provided until closure of the main body which occurred on 31 October 1966.

(8) During this reporting period, the vehicles of this Battalion hauled 476 tons of supplies for other units and 415 tons in support of this unit and traveled a distance of 10,819 miles.

f. Aviation. During the reporting period the Battalion Aviation Section flew the following hours, missions, and sorties.

<u>TYPE A/C</u>	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>MISSIONS</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>% OF PROGRAMMED HOURS</u>
OH-13	169	262	502	141%
O-1	440	322	452	105%

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(1) Throughout the period of this report the batteries of this battalion were located at widely scattered positions, frequently as much as 150 kilometers apart. Nevertheless, the requirements for command and control, staff liaison, visual reconnaissance and registrations were a daily requirement. The responsibility for training and proper operations in the field still rests with the battalion commander. The battalion commander has logged approximately 45 hours a month in the helicopter to assure himself that the batteries are conducting their missions properly as well as assuring that coordination was being maintained with supported headquarters. He has also sent the staff officers out to assist the batteries in the performance of their mission. This could not have been done without the helicopter assigned to this battalion under an approved USARV augmentation. It is felt by the battalion commander that without the instant response available in the assigned helicopter he would have been severely hampered in the performance of his mission. The same situation exists for the two O-1's which are also assigned to this battalion under a USARV approved augmentation. Artillery must see to be effective and in the flat terrain in which we are fighting the best way to see is by the use of aircraft. The battalion O-1's respond to the visual reconnaissance requirements of our Group Headquarters as well as those required by the firing batteries. To be effective, Artillery must have current and correct data and one of the best ways to accomplish this is by registration; the only way to register is through the use of the battalion aircraft. The effectiveness of this battalion would be far less without the eyes of the artillery found in the aviation section.

g. Civic Action. During the reporting period the Battalion Survey Section surveyed in streets and home sites for construction of a new village (Vinh Son). During the reporting period the Battalion Medical Section provided medical coverage for approximately 1775 Vietnamese in the Phu Loi area.

## SECTION II

### 1. (C) Observations (Lessons Learned)

#### a. Morale.

(1) Item: High morale.

(2) Discussion: Morale in this unit remains extremely high. The men of this unit are keenly aware of their duties and are confident of their abilities to perform them. Daily they improve themselves and their living conditions.

(3) Observation: That the high morale is due in part to the numerous tactical operations in which the battalion has participated and the increased emphasis in training and combat readiness. Another important factor in keeping morale high is the highly popular R&R program and the continued policy of a twelve month tour.

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## b. Operations.

(1) Item: Location of artillery at Tan Son Nhut.

(2) Discussion: During a direct support mission of the Capital Military District (CMD) in a countermortar role, Battery A was located in a position on the air base at Tan Son Nhut where the fires had to pass through the flight pattern of one of the world's busiest airfields. Although the Artillery Liaison Officer to CMD was able to secure a registration point, after considerable effort, this point was not always clear of personnel at the time a registration was scheduled forcing a delay or cancellation of the registration. Positions could have been more suitably selected, perhaps radially outward from the airfield. This could necessitate the deployment of two or more firing elements in order to cover the required area; e.g., one platoon or battery deployed north of the airfield and the other south. As it was, the battery was co-located with the countermortar radar. This eased communications but hampered the adjustment of the Artillery by radar on countermortar targets due to the small apex angle.

(3) Observation: The positioning of Artillery near a busy airfield limits its capabilities due to heavy air traffic. Additionally, co-locating Artillery with countermortar radar hampers the proper adjustment of the Artillery due to the small apex angle.

## c. Training and Organization.

(1) Item: Artillery accident due to shortage of fully qualified personnel.

(2) Discussion: During the reporting period, this unit was involved in an unfortunate accident in which several Americans were killed and wounded due to improper gunnery procedures and failure of all FDC personnel to be cognizant of the Infantry's location. This pointed out just how weak this organization was in fully qualified fire direction personnel, both officer and enlisted. The firing batteries normally operate separately from the battalion and are required to maintain an alert operational Fire Direction Center on a 24 hour - seven day a week basis. In order to operate a safe, efficient battery FDC, a minimum of one (1) Fire Direction Officer, who would have the same qualifications as a battalion assistant S-3; two (2) Computers, two (2) Chart Operators and one (1) Radiotelephone operator are required on each shift. As a minimum, each battery must have at least two shifts. These minimum requirements closely approximate those of a battalion FDC. The present TO&E authorizes half the personnel required to operate the battery FDC on a 24 hour basis. The Battalion FDC is authorized twelve enlisted men and requires a minimum of seven EM per shift. This indicates an additional shortage of two enlisted men in the Battalion FDC as authorized in the present TO&E. This unit has submitted a modified TO&E which would authorize sufficient personnel for two shifts in battery and Battalion FDC's. This Artillery incident brought about a detailed examination of the FDC training and personnel. Since FDC personnel were

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not being assigned in sufficient quantity to support our operational requirements, the majority of the Battalion Fire Direction personnel were attached to the firing batteries. A minimum number of personnel was retained to operate a Battalion Tactical FDC without the capability of checking all data computed in the batteries. In addition, the firing battery commanders screened personnel, and selected several in each battery to augment their FDC's. Even with the augmentation, each member of the FDC must work a minimum of twelve hours a day in the Fire Direction Center. In order to establish uniform training procedures within the battery and battalion FDC's, a circular on standard gunnery procedures was developed (See Inclosure 2). This circular includes a fire mission sequence of events script and has been very beneficial in training and establishing uniform procedures in all FDC's.

(3) Observation: When the TO&E does not authorize sufficient personnel to efficiently operate for 24 hours a day - seven days a week, it must be augmented out of available resources to properly perform the mission. Standard procedures should be developed, tried and practiced with emphasis on double checks and accuracy. Additionally, the recent OBC graduate, although capable in practicing basic gunnery procedures, is not qualified to apply the employment of Artillery to the tactical situation without further training.

## d. Communications Coordination.

(1) Item: Required communication coordination between supporting units and supported units in tactical operations.

(2) Discussion: During several operations in this reporting period, some difficulty was encountered due to lack of coordinated communication instruction. Problems arose in the use of different shackles codes, points of origin, reference systems and SOP's.

(3) Observation: Complete coordination must be made prior to each phase of an operation to include the exchange of SOI's, and an attempt made to standardize and simplify firing procedure communications in order to provide timely fire support.

## e. Logistics.

(1) Item: Movement of ammunition and supplies by Army Mule versus 3/4 ton truck.

(2) Discussion: During airmobile operations where men and equipment are moved into remote areas by helicopter, a light weight vehicle could be used to great advantage to move ammunition and supplies. During resupply of 105mm howitzer ammunition, it can not always be placed near the guns and sometimes has to be moved by hand. The battery normally takes a 3/4 ton truck which is used for moving the howitzers and hauling FDC equipment. An additional 3/4 ton truck is used as a communication system with two mounted AN/VRC-46 radios. When using the 3/4 ton truck as a

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communication system, it cannot be used for moving ammunition.

(3) Observation: The use of an Army Mule in moving ammunition during airmobile operations would cut down unnecessary work and increase an Artillery battery's capability to move and break down ammunition where it can be used immediately when required. This would also result in a greater lift capability per sortie by reducing by one the total number of 3/4 ton trucks required.

f. Water resupply.

(1) Item: Water resupply by trailer versus five-gallon cans.

(2) Discussion: During airmobile operations, the resupply of water becomes an important factor. The use of five-gallon water cans takes up an immense amount of time in loading and especially in unloading in areas where the helicopter becomes a large target.

(3) Observation: By externally sling-loading a water trailer for air movement by a CH-47 helicopter, the amount of time required in the landing zone is cut to the minimum and resupply is required less often.

2. (C) Recommendations.

a. Reference is made to Section II, paragraph 1f. A strong recommendation is made for immediate approval by Department of the Army of the MTO&E forwarded by USARV which seeks the augmentation of an aviation section to the TO&E of this battalion.

b. Reference is made to Section II, paragraph 1c. As stated in the reference paragraph, it has been necessary to augment the battery FDC's with personnel from other sections to assure the accuracy and safety of the fires. Prompt attention is recommended to the study of such augmentation of all battalions being deployed to Vietnam. It is also recommended that students in OBC be taught to consider the gunnery problems along with a tactical situation to preclude the delivery of fires on friendly elements. This battalion presently is preparing an MTO&E which will recommend additional spaces in the battery and battalion FDC's.

c. Reference is made to Section II, paragraph 1e(1). User tests should be undertaken to consider the use of an Army Mule to replace a 3/4 ton truck when conducting airmobile operations.

1  
2 Incl

1. Schedule of Operations

2. Gunnery Procedures *w/d*

*Albert F. Turner*  
ALBERT F. TURNER

Lieutenant Colonel, Artillery  
Commanding

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# Schedule of Operations

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AUGUST

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
ALPHA	GSR	1st INF	ATTACHED	33rd ARMY				GSR										OPERATION													
BRAVO	GSR	1st INF	DIV															OPERATION													
CHARLIE																															
DELTA																															
ECHO																															

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SUBJECT: Operational Report on Lessons Learned (U)

HEADQUARTERS, 23D ARTILLERY GROUP, APO 96289, US Forces, 9 November 1966

TO: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam Artillery, APO US Forces 96227

1. (U) The quarterly report submitted by the 2d Howitzer Battalion, 13th Artillery is adequate.

2. (U) Ref Section I, para 1c (2) & (4). This additional emphasis on gun section training and fire direction center training has assisted in reducing and eliminating gunnery errors throughout the battalion.

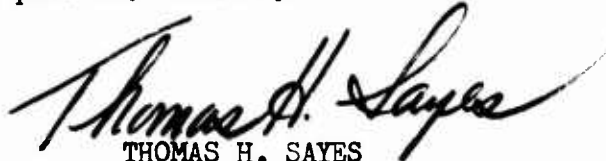
3. (U) Ref Section II, para 1b (1). 2d Battalion, 13th Artillery has deployed to Tan Son Nhut Air Base on two occasions in an area defense role and has been located adjacent to the MPQ-4A Counter Mortar radar on both occasions. This positioning does facilitate communications between the radar and the firing element, but decreases the accuracy of the data provided to the battery. The firing element should be positioned away from the radar installation to maximize the effectiveness of both radar and howitzers.

4. (U) Ref Section II, para 1c (3). A modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) is presently being prepared to increase the number of personnel in the fire direction center at both battery and battalion level.

5. (U) Ref Section II, para 2a. Concur.

6. (U) Ref Section II, para 2b. Concur.

7. (U) Ref Section II, para 2c. Concur.



THOMAS H. SAYES  
Colonel, Artillery  
Commanding

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AVFB-FACO (5 Nov 66) 2d Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report On Lessons Learned (U)

DA, HQ, II FFORCEV ARTY, APO 96266

23 NOV 1966

THRU: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, APO 96266

Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN:  
AVC-DH, APO 96307

Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN:  
GPOP-MH, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department  
of the Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

1. (U) The Operational Report submitted by the 2d Howitzer Battalion, 13th Artillery is considered adequate.

2. (C) Reference Section II, paragraph 2a. Concur. The lack of sufficient helicopters and observation aircraft seriously hampers command and control of widely dispersed artillery batteries. Moreover, the target acquisition and observed fire capabilities of the unit is seriously impaired. The recommended augmentation is deemed adequate to support these requirements. Observation aircraft and helicopters for artillery battalions has also been made a matter of discussion in the Operational Report submitted by this headquarters (see letter, AVFB-FAC, HQ, II FFORCEV Arty, dated 14 Nov 66, Subj: Operational Report Lessons Learned, Section Ib para 3.

3. (C) Reference Section II, paragraph 2b. Concur. Training in tactical fire direction should go hand-in-hand with technical training of Basic Course Students. The austere TOEs of field artillery fire direction centers preclude operations on a 24-hour basis especially when batteries are spread out as they often are in Vietnam



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AVFB-FACO (5 Nov 66)                      2nd Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report On Lessons Learned (U)

4. (C) Reference Section II, paragraph 2c. Concur. The 2/13 Arty will be requested to submit a requisition and justification for the issue of an Army Mule.

*Charles M. Mizell*  
CHARLES M. MIZELL  
Colonel, Artillery  
Acting Commander

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AVFBC-H (5 Nov 66) 3rd Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October  
1966 (RCS CSFOR-65)

DA, HQ II Field Force Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96266 2 JAN 1967

THRU: Commanding General, USARV, ATTN: AVC-DH, APO 96307


Commander in Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-MH, APO 96588

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Dept of the  
Army, Washington, D.C., 20310

This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report for Period  
Ending 31 October 1966 submitted by Headquarters, 2D Howitzer  
Battalion, 13th Artillery and concurs in the comments contained both  
in the basic document and the 1st and 2nd indorsement;

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl  
nc

  
WILLIAM K. HAGY  
Major ARMOR  
Act Asst AG.

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AVHGC-DH (5 Nov 66) 4th Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending  
31 October 1966 (RCS CEFOR-65)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96307 16 JAN 1967

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 October 1966 from Headquarters, 2d Howitzer Battalion, 13th Artillery as indorsed.


2. Pertinent comments are as follows:

a. Reference Paragraph 2a, Section II, Page 9: MTOF is currently at Department of the Army.

b. Reference Paragraph 2, 2d Indorsement: Combat Support and Combat Service Support Units deploy with Aviation Sections at zero strength in personnel and equipment, due to policy established by Department of the Army. This policy will not change in the near future and was initiated because of the world-wide shortage of aviation assets.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

2 Incl  
nc



R. J. THORNTON  
1st Lt, AGC  
Asst Adjutant General

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GPOP-OT(5 Nov 66)

5th Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending  
31 October 1966 (RCS CSFOR-65), HQ 2d How Bn, 13th Arty

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558 4 MAR 1967

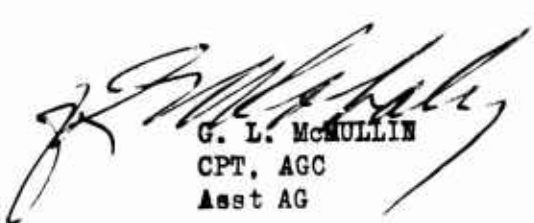
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in the basic report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

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INFORMATION

  
G. L. McMULLIN  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

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